
CHAPTER 4: THE HUNT/OLMSTED PLAN AND EXISTING PLAN AND CHARACTER OF BILTMORE VILLAGE

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Please contact Historic Resources Commission staff at
(828) 259-5836 or (828) 259-5638 for a copy of the maps

THE HUNT/OLMSTED 1917 PLAN

From a land-use point of view, the village was planned with four sub-areas. Each area displayed its own architectural style yet blended nicely with adjacent areas through transitional style buildings.

Nore Winter describes these areas in the *Biltmore Village Historic District Design Guidelines*.

THE COMMERCIAL VILLAGE CORE

The first sub-area, the Village Core, was centered around the Plaza, and consisted of commercial buildings that were built at the sidewalk edge. A "mixed-use" structure (designed by Richard Sharpe) was included at the corner of the Plaza and Brook Street which incorporated businesses on the ground level with residential functions above. This structure set a model for commercial buildings that other designers followed into the 1930s, in which the first floor was predominantly glass storefront, oriented to pedestrians, and the upper floor was more solid in appearance, with small window openings. Although the original mixed-use building was demolished, this commercial character still pervaded the core area.

Commercial buildings were distinguished by their mix of brick, stone, and pebbledash stucco. Many had flat parapets for roof lines. Others had large gabled roofs, with larger dormers. Sidewalks were uninterrupted by curb cuts or driveways, except at alley entrances, with service areas located in the rear.

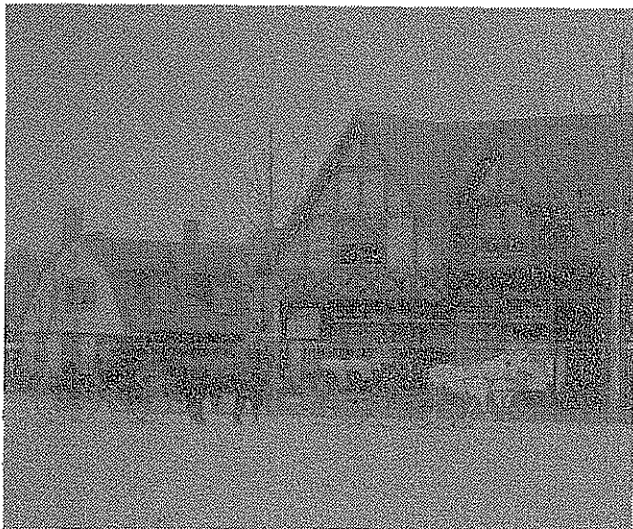
THE COTTAGE AREAS

Extensive portions of the Village were designed to include structures with a half-timbered cottage appearance. The majority of the buildings were indeed residences, but many also housed commercial and institutional functions. Visually, however, they all worked to convey the sense of an European village. In general, the longer, uninterrupted streets were lined with cottages. Cottages that appeared genuinely residential were planned along both the east and west axis of All Souls Crescent. A central swath of residential buildings, although generally larger in scale, was located along Angle Street.

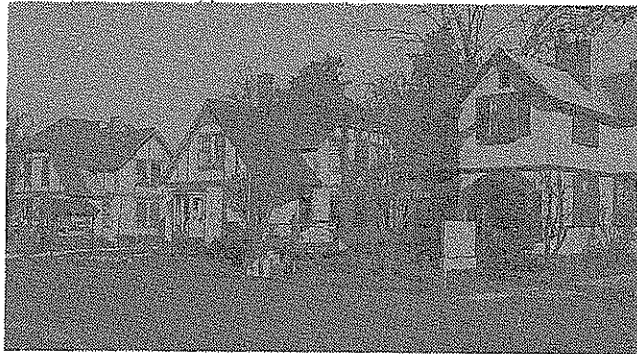
On the fringes of the Village Core, commercial uses operated in buildings designed in the "cottage" manner rather than in commercial blocks. This was perhaps a transitional device planned by Olmsted.



The Biltmore Train Station 1917



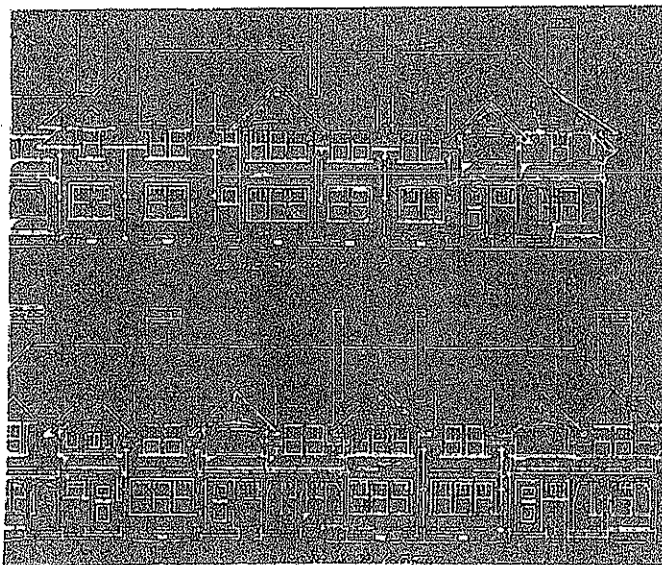
Original commercial building



All Souls Crescent 1990

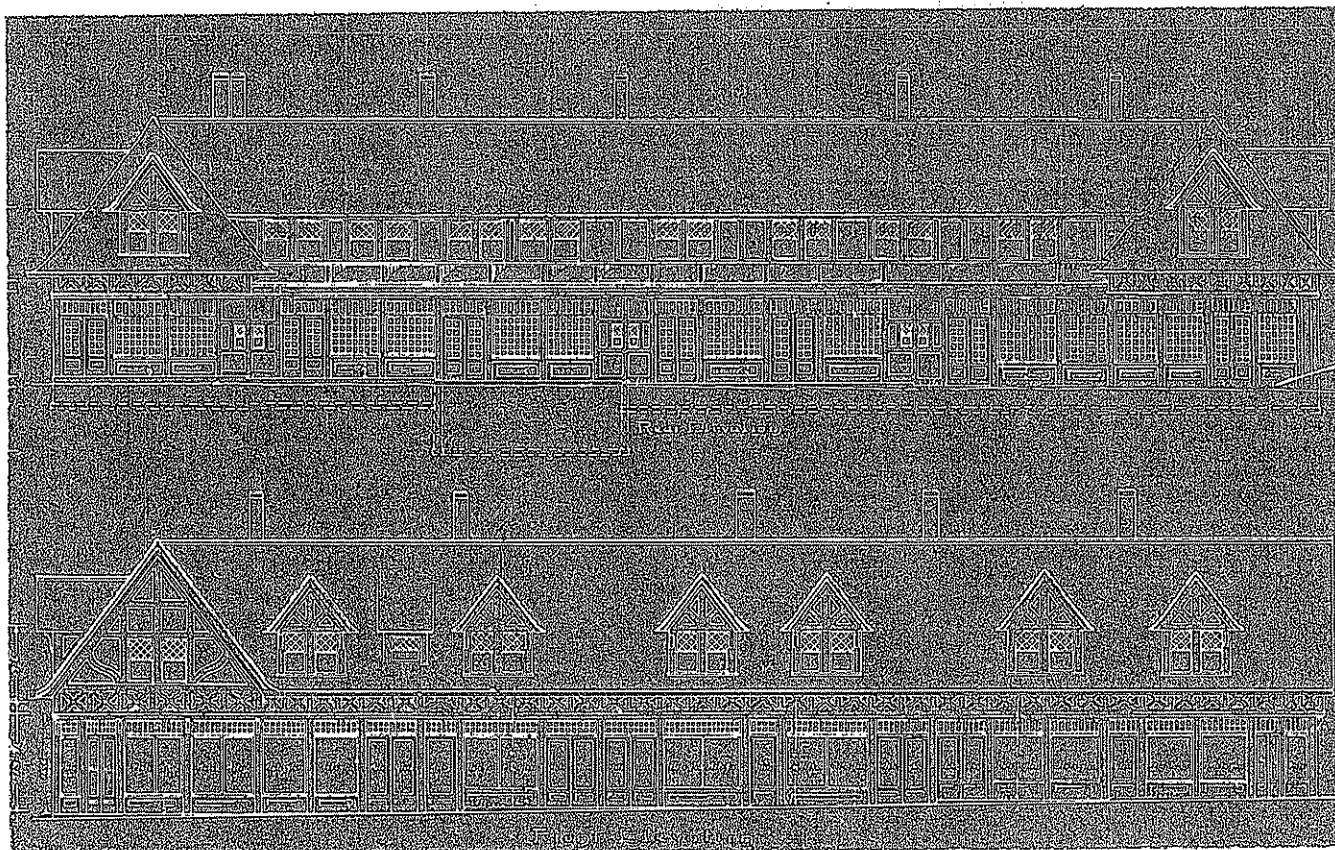
THE MIXED-USE AREAS

Two districts appear to have been planned as locations for buildings that combined a mix of activities, including residential, commercial and institutional functions. One such area was located along Lodge Street from the Depot west through the intersection of Hendersonville Road (Biltmore Avenue). The second area flanked the Church on the east (at Biltmore Avenue), and on the west (at Swan Street). Buildings in these areas were designed in the cottage style, but often were larger than the normal cottages, or they employed more distinctive forms and details. Nonetheless, these buildings related to their context in terms of yard setbacks and orientation to the streets.



R.S. Smith

The apartment building and reading room illustrated above was planned to be built on the corner of Lodge Street and Biltmore Road (presently occupied by Exxon). The drawing is dated July 1902. The building was never built.

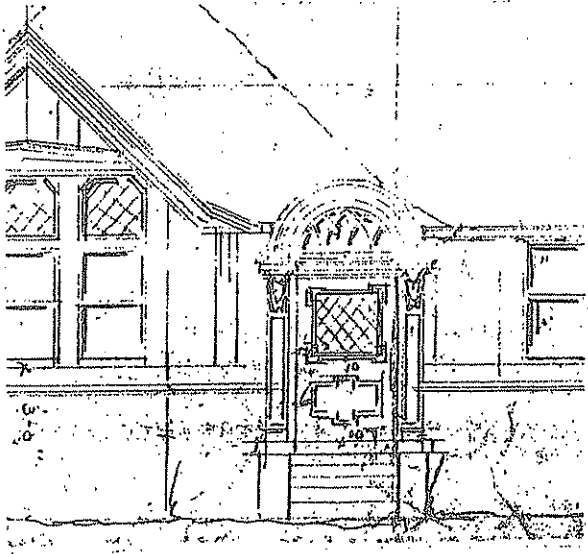


The "Village Stores and Apartments" were good examples of mixed use occupancy.

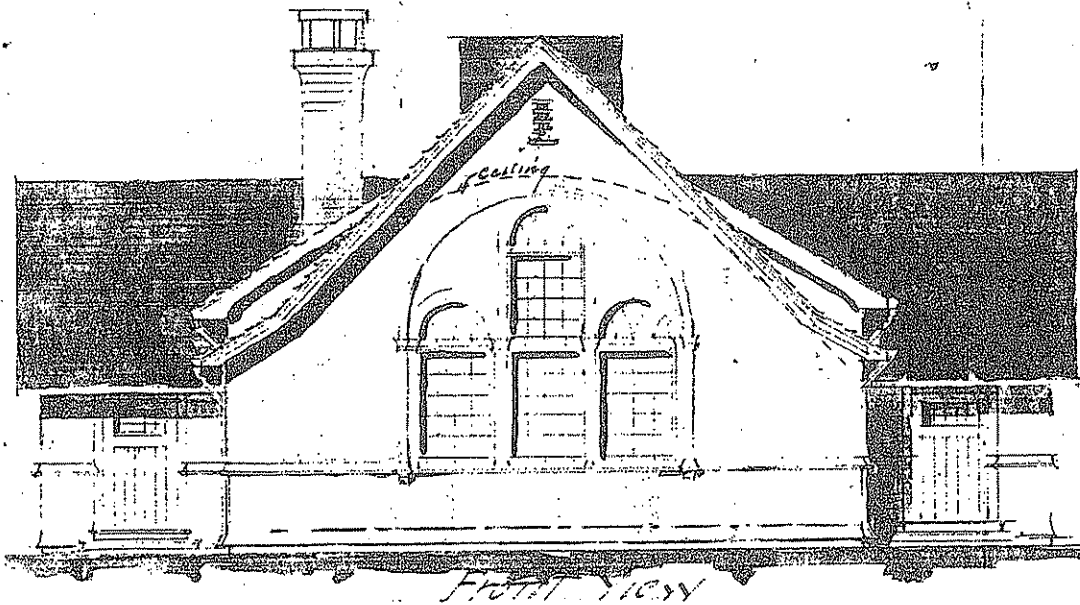
R.S. Smith

MAJOR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONAL AREAS

Key sites in the Village were set aside for the Depot, the church and hospital as major public institutions. Although other public service buildings were also planned for the Village, such as a boy's club and a school, they were more integrated into the overall plan. Other public facilities now demolished included a tennis court and "cricket ground." The Depot and church stood at the most prominent sites in the Village, while the hospital was set to the edge across the Village brook, in a quieter, more recuperative atmosphere.



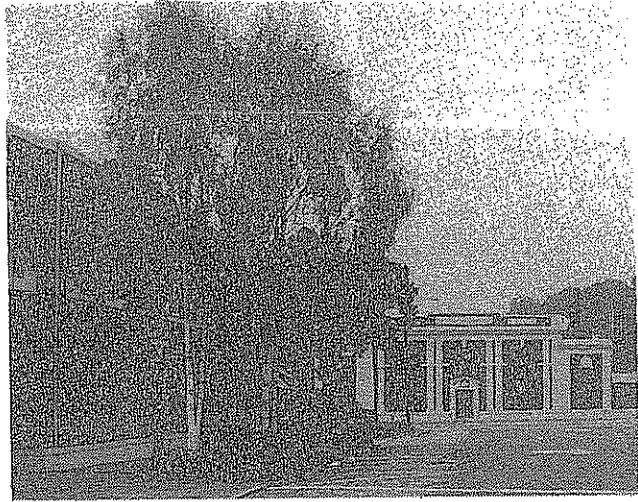
The entrance planned for the boys club shown above was more decorative than the cottage entrances.



Smith's design for this school building featured tryptic arched windows reminiscent of All Souls Church and a vaulted ceiling.

THE EXISTING 1990 PLAN

Today, nearly 100 years later, many buildings in the Village have been replaced. Original vacant lots which were never developed, now contain various types of structures. Looking at the Village with an architectural eye, many opportunities for improvement become evident.



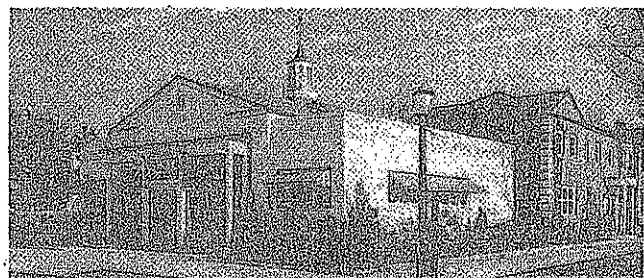
The Biltmore-Oteen Bank, 26 Lodge Street

THE COMMERCIAL VILLAGE CORE

The original commercial building designed by Smith and built on Biltmore Plaza is gone. However, it did have the desired effect of introducing a high quality commercial pattern to the area around Biltmore Plaza. The Biltmore-Oteen Bank and the McGeachy Building, although not original, contribute to this quality historic commercial context of Biltmore Village. Recently developed parking for the McGeachy Building has been effectively screened. Unfortunately, the original Smith commercial building was replaced in the 1950s by a neo-classical colonial bowling alley complete with cupola and weather vane. Recent owners have stripped the painted brick and continue to pursue methods of blending the building into the European context of Biltmore Village. Conversion of a large portion of office space on the Boston Way side of the building has recently made significant contributions to the pedestrian environment between Biltmore Plaza and the cottage core areas.



The McGeachy Building



Original photograph "The Biltmore Plaza Recreation Center" (now Talbot's) 10 Biltmore Plaza.



The McGeachy Building and The Biltmore Estate Office Buildings it looks today

The Biltmore Estate offices, designed by R.M. Hunt, still occupies the northwest corner of Biltmore Plaza with a quiet reverence to the style and dream George Vanderbilt had for Biltmore Village. Recent re-roofing has contributed an easily obtainable brown-red roof material to Biltmore Village which is consistent with Mrs. Vanderbilt's wishes.

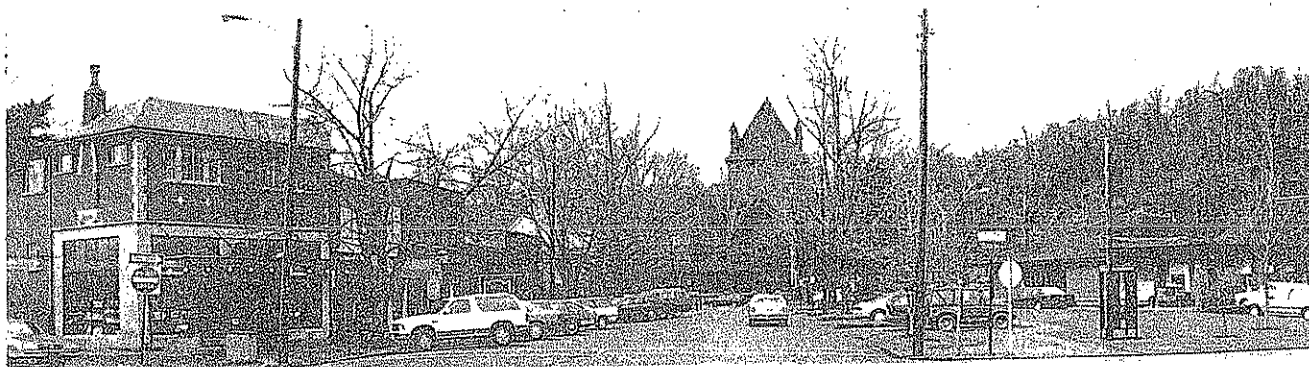
The Biltmore Village train station, also designed by Hunt, was adapted to a restaurant prior to the design review process. Recent tenants have painted the roof red to blend with the estate's new office roof, and the Village guidelines. The view from the train station to the church, which is accentuated by the tapering of Biltmore Plaza and Kitchin Place, has been obstructed by inappropriate plantings.



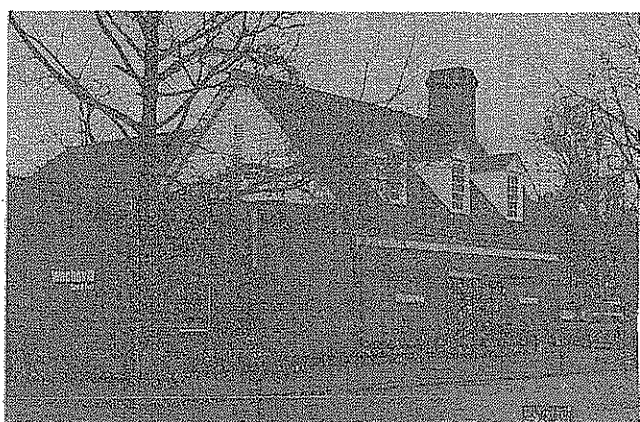
The Depot Restaurant and Lounge, formerly The Biltmore Village Train Station



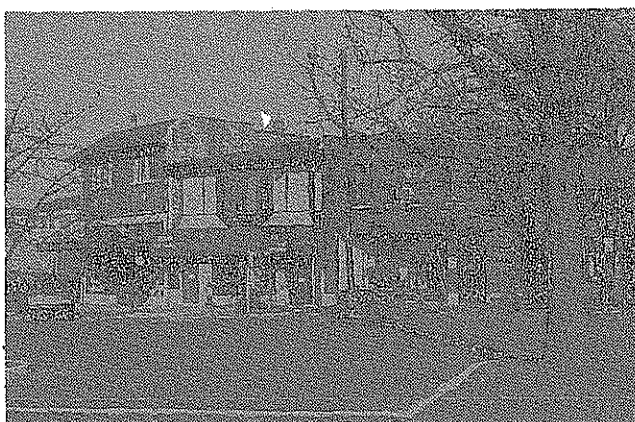
Biltmore Plaza looking south towards All Souls Church



Kitchin Place looking south towards All Souls Church



Wachovia Bank, 11 Kitchen Place

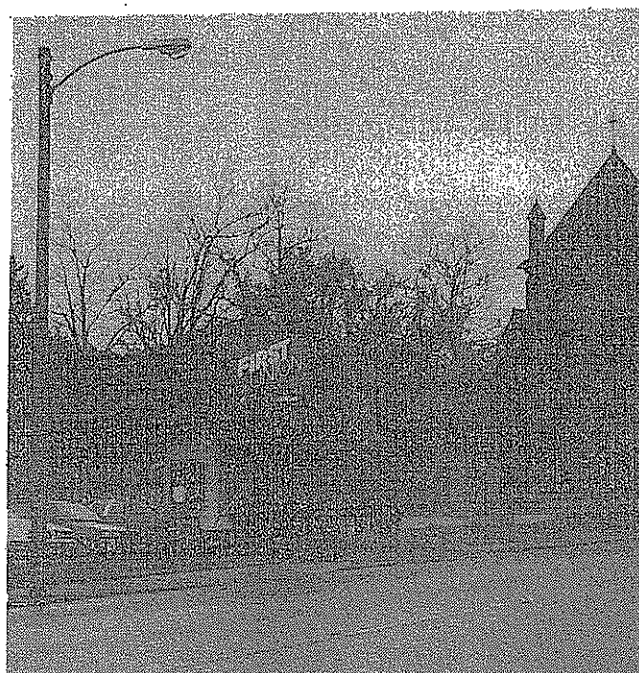


Buildings (Joseph Banks) on Kitchin Place

KITCHIN PLACE

Early commercial development also exists along Kitchin Place today, the highest quality and most contextual building being the old Biltmore Pharmacy. This building and its neighbors set the stage for a "main street" as an axis between Biltmore Plaza and All Souls Church.

Branch type banks now occupy both sides of the south end of Kitchin Place. While First Union Bank is more contextual though contemporary in style, Wachovia Bank has introduced an inappropriate American Colonial style motif into Biltmore Village. The drive-in window portion of both banks interfere with the pedestrian environment. Parking lots of both banks are unscreened and unsightly. Curb cuts are numerous and adjacent sidewalks need major repair work.



First Union Bank, 1 Angle Street



THE BILTMORE-OTEEEN BANK AT BILTMORE

66-755
5

BILTMORE, N.C.

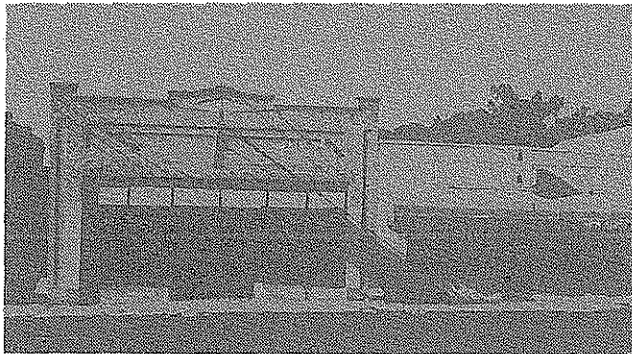
July 19 1926

PAY TO THE ORDER OF

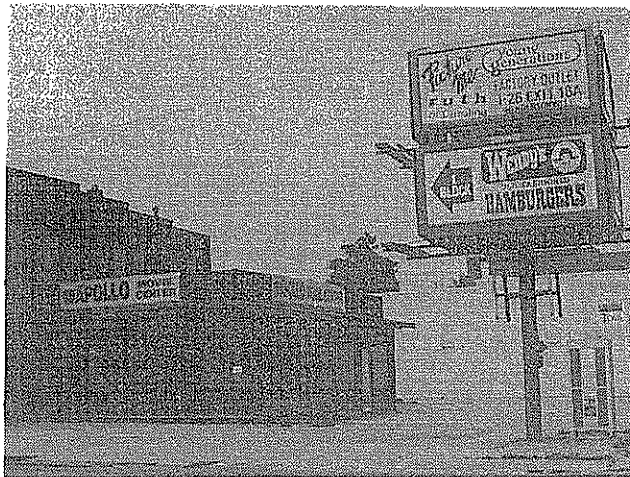
David W. Sanderson \$ 364 48



Biltmore Shoe Shop



Dancing Bear Toys and the Hot Shot Cafe



Lodge Street and Biltmore Avenue

LODGE STREET

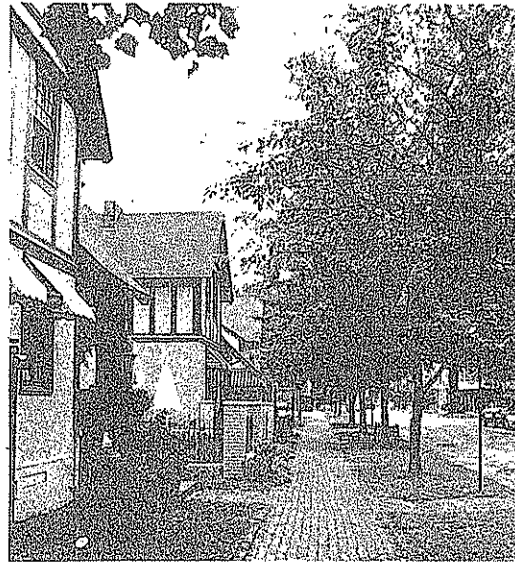
Traveling West on Lodge Street, from the train station, one can't help but notice the Biltmore Shoe Shop sandwiched between the Biltmore-Oteen Bank and the Hot Shot Cafe. This R.S. Smith office building originally faced Lodge Street and was the first office for the Biltmore-Oteen Bank in Biltmore Village (see check above). This building was rotated 90° to make room for the neoclassical structure we know today as the old Biltmore-Oteen Bank. It's front facade is practically hidden in the narrow alley way next to the Hot Shot Cafe.

Smaller store front retail buildings contribute to the commercial context along the westend of Lodge Street. However, the corner of Lodge Street and Biltmore Avenue is home to a renovated gas station which is a non-contributing building. Off-premise two-story, four-sided billboards on this corner compete with business signage and have most likely limited the past tenant's visibility. Recent design review guidelines have improved the historic imagery of the building at this corner but as of the publication of this plan have not been able to affect the off-premise signage.

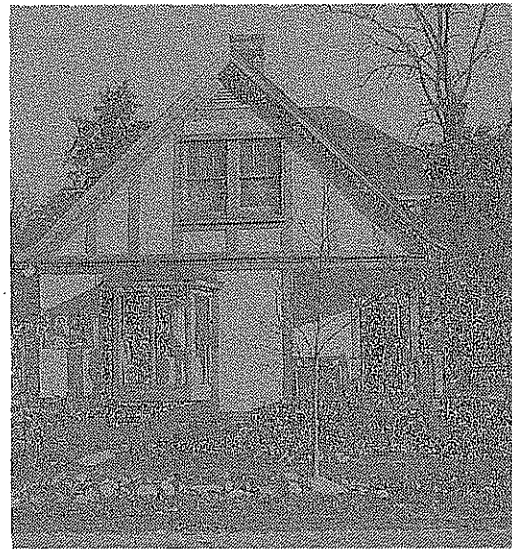
THE COTTAGE AREAS

The southeast end of Boston Way and the northeast ends of Swan Street and all Souls Crescent are the most intact vestiges of the cottage area remaining today. Brick sidewalks, granite curbs, and street trees remain in various states of disrepair. The cottages have all been converted to retail businesses. Most have been adaptively re-used with the benefit of design review. However, a few earlier conversions still have inappropriate bay windows, unscreened service areas, out-of-place stone steps, and implanted portions of Victorian stain glass.

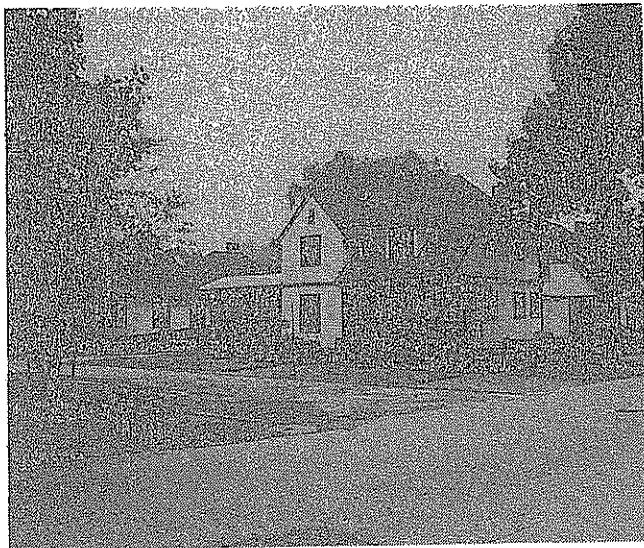
These are minor problems in comparison to the strip commercial drive-in type buildings located on the west side of Swan Street. Unscreened parking have significantly eroded the pedestrian experience in this area. One story, flat roofed rectangular buildings seem architecturally at odds with their historic neighbors. The existence of overhead power lines further contributes to the dissolution of the historic imagery.



Chelsea's Antiques, 4 Boston Way



5 All Souls Crescent 1988



Hathaways, 7 Boston Way



ABC Store, 4 Swan Street

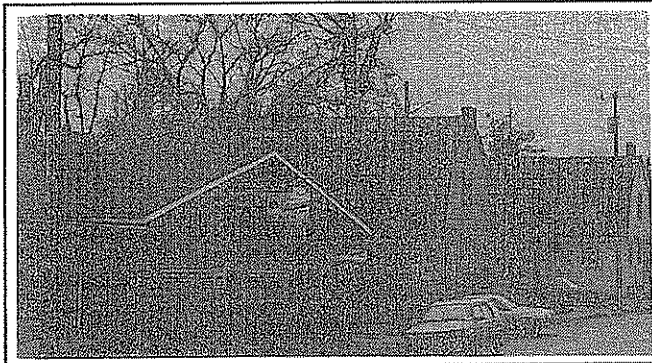


All Souls Crescent.

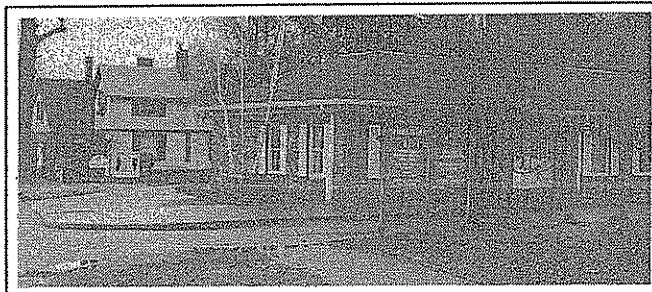
An original row of Smith Cottages along All Souls Crescent lend charm to the cottage district. On the southeast corner of Brook Street and All Souls Crescent, a one-story brick ranch-style building terminates All Souls Crescent in a non-contributory fashion. The 3-in-12 low pitch roof contrasts with the steep pitch of its neighbors.

A pair of Neo-Colonial brick office buildings at the corner of All Souls Crescent, Angle Street and Village Lane replaced original unique cottages in the 1960's. Brick color and imagery do not contribute to the Biltmore Village style. The removal of street trees replaced by out of scale dogwoods is unfortunate.

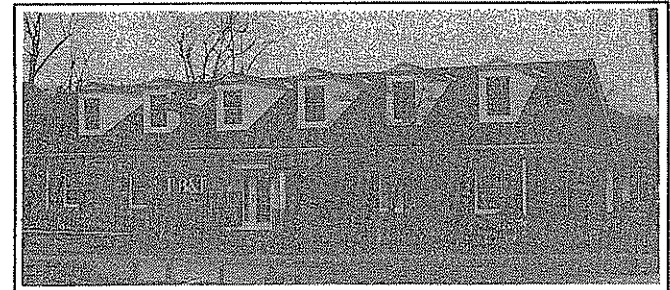
By contrast, a one-story contemporary structure on the southeast corner of Swan Street and Angle Street takes advantage of contextual materials and blends rather quietly into the canopy of original trees surrounding it.



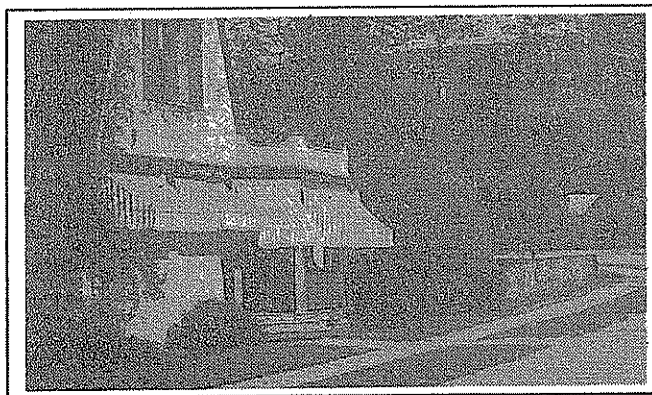
Brook Street and All Souls Crescent.



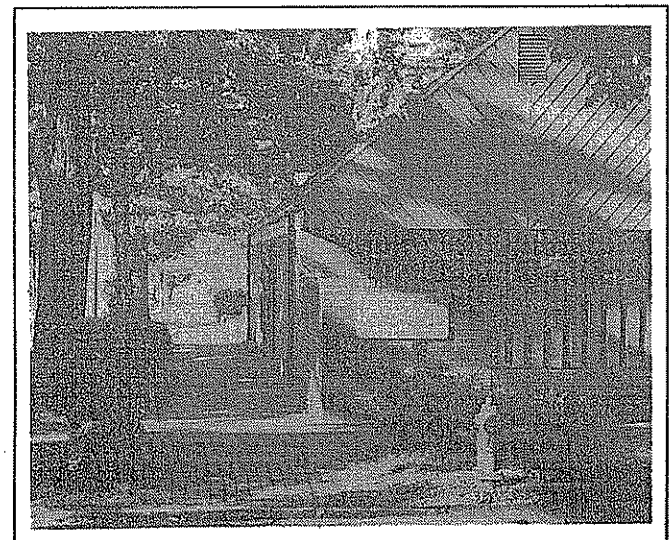
All Souls Crescent and Village Lane.



All Souls Crescent and Angle Street



All Souls Crescent and Village Lane 1909. Note bridge over stream and hospital in background.



Swann Street and Angle Street



Black Dome, Korth's Antiques and 47 Brook Street Offices

BROOK STREET

Commercial fill buildings east of the train station echo the historic character of the original post office which remains today. A recent "Post Modern" refacing of a brick storefront style building boldly contrasts with its neighbors.

A mixture of low quality in-fill buildings and non-

contributory structures have completely eroded any sense of historic imagery on the north side of Brook Street. Coupled with the negative impact of NC 25-A, this originally charming portion of Biltmore Village appears blighted.

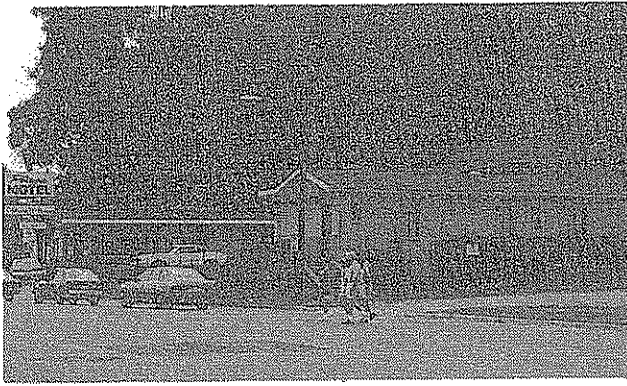


Brook Street 1990

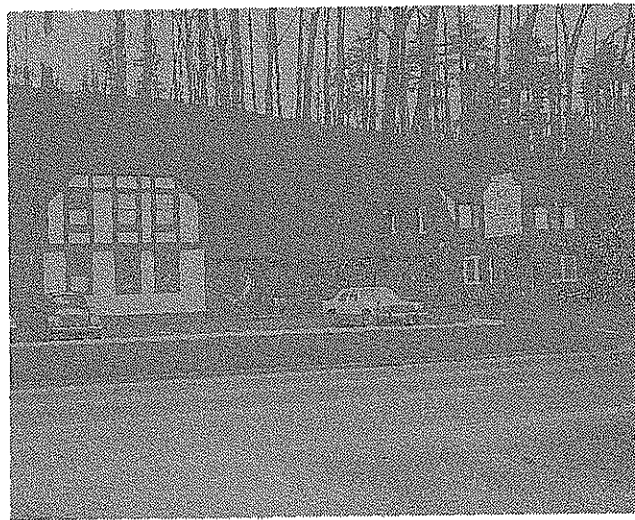


Brook Street 1909

Photo courtesy of Biltmore Estate®



The Plaza Motel.



Fireside Antiques and Interiors, and The Mona Joy Boutique.



Dr. William Mynatt office.

WEST ALL SOULS CRESCENT

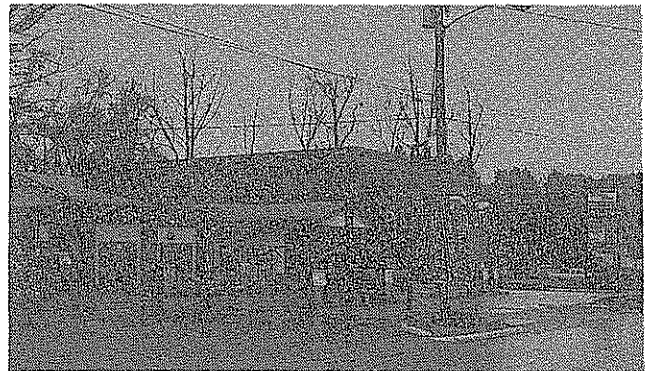
Cottages were originally planned to be built on the west side of All Souls Crescent but were never started. The irreversible widening of this portion of All Souls Crescent to five lanes has shortened the original lot depths which are further encumbered by the steep mountainside to their west.

A non-contributory fifties-style motel occupies a pivotal location at the corner of Vanderbilt Road and All Souls Crescent. A vacant gravel lot to its north provides truck parking for guests.

Three relocated houses (one original), rescued from demolition, help to establish a cottage imagery on the next three lots which front on this five lane street. A planting buffer would improve the impact of the parking in front of these buildings.

A contemporary-style office structure once tucked into the woods before road widening now reveals its out-of-context design.

Directly adjacent to the entrance of Biltmore Estate® lies a non-contributory gas station and convenience store. Its grey roof contrasts drastically with the tile roofs on the brick and stucco structures adjacent to the Biltmore Gatehouse. Its flat roofed metal canopy has a bright orange accent stripe. Backlit plastic signage with reader boards parallel the Estate's boundary.



Biltmore Country Store and Eblen Gas.

THE COMMERCIAL STRIP

Multinational and regional franchises have made their way into historic Biltmore Village due to confluence of major roads and the 700,000 guests visiting Biltmore Estate® each year.

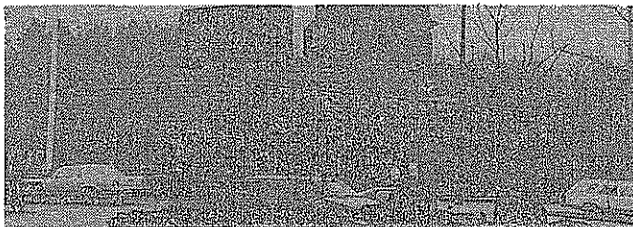
McDonald's corporate image has been implanted into this historic district with a building design similar to most commercial strip developments. Its non-contributory design has recently benefited by design review of its roof color which is now red. Its golden arches stand out of scale and out of compliance with the City of Asheville's sign ordinance.

Exxon recently replaced a red tiled roof structure with its new corporate image building. Its flat roof panelized "international style" design contrasts drastically with historic architecture in the district.

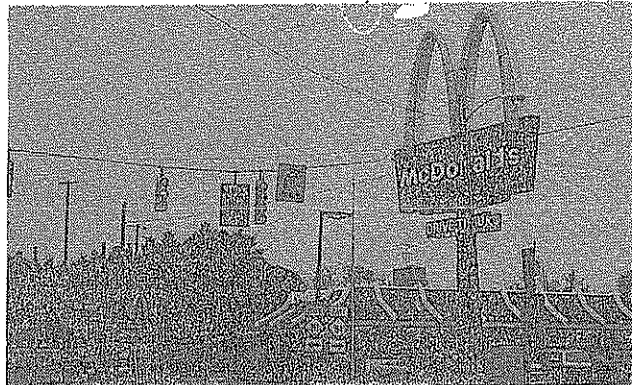
A restaurant across the street on the corner of Hendersonville Road and Lodge Street also displays a two-level, four-sided billboard. The building and its bright yellow backlit sign are nonconforming. Parking is not screened and inadequate service access forces delivery trucks to park on sidewalks.

The recent conversion of the Gulf service station over to BP netted an attractive canopy for this locally-owned property. Other owners along the commercial strip would benefit from participating in the design review process as did this cooperative property owner.

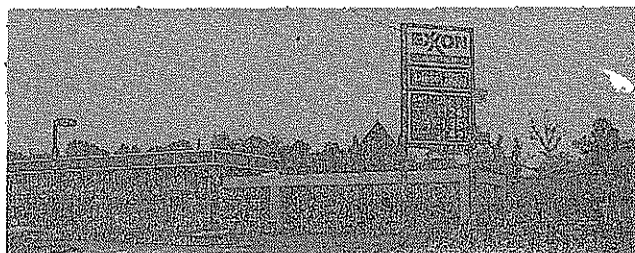
Hardee's brick structure with its cedar shingle mansard-style roof attempts to contribute to its historic neighbors with style and materials. The chocolate brown bricks and a minimal roof mass on this one-story building surrounded by an asphalt parking lot however do not contribute to the historic district. Use of the city's right-of-way on Boston Way and Angle street has eliminated sidewalks and destroyed the original street trees.



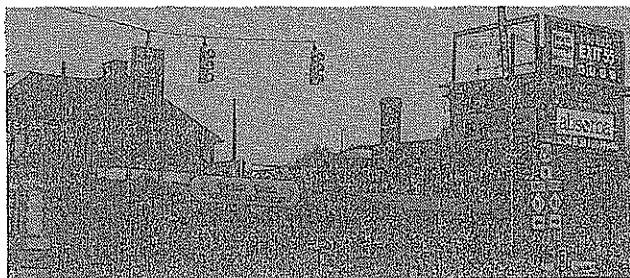
Hardee's.



McDonalds and Biltmore Estate® Ticket Office in background.



Exxon.



Pedro's Porch restaurant.



Jerry's Biltmore BP service station.

THE INSTITUTIONAL AREA

There could be no better gateway to the institutional area of Biltmore Village than All Souls Church. Its majestic tower and landscaped grounds continue to inspire those who pause to notice its beauty. This Romanesque style church designed by R.M. Hunt is Biltmore Village's key building.

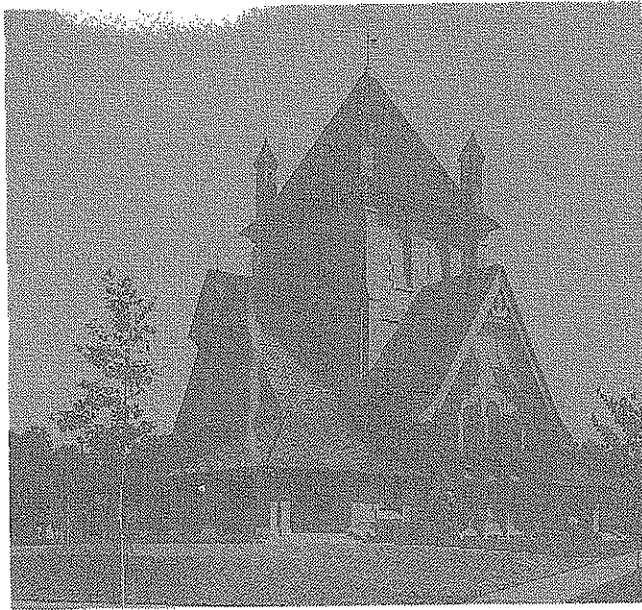
Directly opposite on the corner of All Souls Crescent and Hendersonville Road, an out-of-context branch bank was constructed which does not contribute to the architecture of the historic district. In addition, rock wing walls and glass gable ends are not appropriate elements.

The United States Post Office is another example of a 1950s suburban-style building in Biltmore Village. Neither its setback from the road nor its style contribute architecturally to the Village.

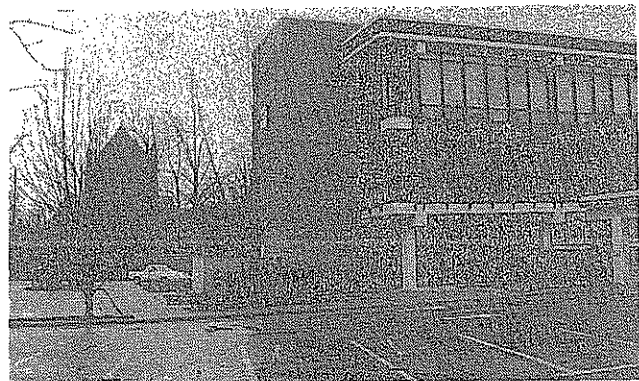
The State Employees Credit Union's architectural style, footprint, massing, roofing, landscaping, and massive area of surface parking all contribute to its status as a non-contributory building.

The setting for the Old Biltmore Village Hospital was originally a recuperative one. Today this fine architectural building still sited along a stream and tucked under trees is surrounded by asphalt parking which masks its beauty.

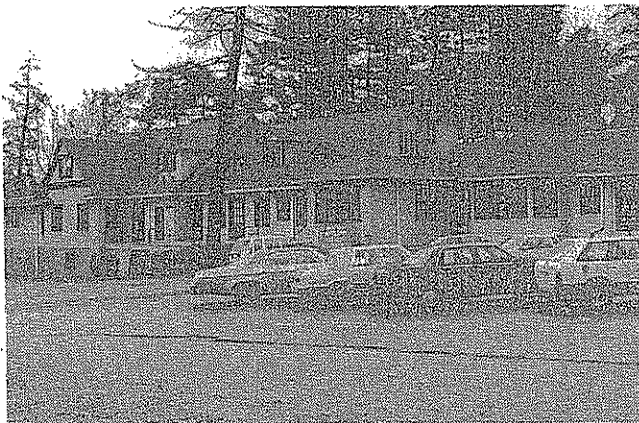
The Biltmore Manor Nursing Home, designed by Douglas Ellington, is the most removed institutional building in the historic district.



All Souls Church designed by Richard Morris Hunt. The American Institute of Architects proudly display the original drawings of this church in their lobby headquarters in Washington D.C.



The State Employees Credit Union.



The Biltmore Manor Nursing Home.



The Old Biltmore Village Hospital.

HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Secretary of Interiors standards for evaluating structures within historic districts:

To be eligible for historic preservation certifications, pursuant to the Tax Reform Act of 1976, structures within districts listed in the National Register are reviewed by the Secretary for conformance to the following established "Standards for Evaluating Structures within Historic Districts."

- A. A structure contributing to the historic significance of a district is one which by location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association adds to the district's sense of time, place and historical development.
- B. A structure not contributing to the historic significance of a district is one which detracts from the district's sense of time and place and historical development intrinsically, or when the integrity of the original design or individual architectural features or spaces have been irretrievably lost.
- C. Ordinarily structures that have been built within the past 50 years shall not be considered eligible unless a strong justification concerning their historical or architectural merit is given.

The Biltmore Village Development Plan Steering Committee's standards for evaluating structures within the Biltmore Village Historic District:

Biltmore Village originated as a planned mixed-use community in the English village tradition. Early structures designed by Richard Morris Hunt and Richard Sharpe Smith exhibit those picturesque features typical in English and Norman building traditions. As the commercial core developed, contemporary interpretations of traditional and period revival architectural styles were constructed. The Biltmore-Oteen bank building and the McGeachy building exhibit classical forms and features. While these structures did not strictly adhere to Hunt's original concept, they provide visual harmony in context to the surrounding buildings. These structures exhibit a sense of proportion, material and architectural detail that are compatible with the original design intent.

In viewing structures in the Biltmore Village Historic District, we have codified structures as "contributing", "fill", and "noncontributing". In keeping with the standards established by the National Register, properties identified as fill structures and non-contributing structures should be determined from an historical context. Contemporary structures that maintain the visual harmony, exhibit features compatible to Hunt's original design concept and are pre-1940 structures should be considered fill. Those contemporary structures, while aesthetically pleasing, should be considered non-contributory if they do not exhibit compatible design features such as: massing; construction materials; size, proportion and placement of window and door penetrations; setback; and roofscape.

Landscape features were just as significant to the planned community. These features include lots, public space, parking facilities, and scenic streetscapes. For our study, we should examine these facilities in light of the original landscape plan and their impact on adjoining properties as well as the overall aesthetic quality of the district.

HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL STRUCTURE EVALUATION

LEGEND

- ▲ Contributing
- ▼ Non-contributory
- ◆ Fill

ALL SOULS CRESCENT

▼	1-3 All Souls Crescent	Entenmann's
▲	5 All Souls Crescent	Dentist
▲	6 All Souls Crescent	Great Expectations
▲	7 All Souls Crescent	The Wicker Cottage
▲	10 All Souls Crescent	Christmas House
▼	12 All Souls Crescent	Vacant Lot
▼	20 All Souls Crescent	State Employees Credit Union
▼	22 All Souls Crescent	Parking Lot
▲	2 All Souls Crescent	Stuffed Artichoke
▲	4 All Souls Crescent	Creative Yarn
▼	111 Hendersonville Road	Plaza Motel
▼	28 All Souls Crescent	Vacant Lot
▲	30-32 All Souls Crescent	Fireside Antiques
▲	34 All Souls Crescent	Quick Slim
▼	36 All Souls Crescent	Dr. Mynatt, Dentist
▼	40 All Souls Crescent	Biltmore Country Store

SWAN STREET

▲	1 Swan Street	Mud Pies
▲	3 Swan Street	Baggie Goose
▼	Parking Lot	BB&T
▼	9 Swan Street	Vacant
▼	2 Swan Street	Heavenly Ham
▼	Parking Lot	ABC
▼	Parking Lot	Wachovia

BILTMORE PLAZA/KITCHIN

▼	10 Biltmore Plaza	Talbot's
◆	10 Biltmore Plaza	Talbot's
▲	9 Biltmore Plaza	Bell's Gift Shop
◆	3 Kitchin	Woodwings
◆	5 Kitchin	Joseph Bank's Clothiers
◆	7 Kitchin	Joseph Bank's Clothiers
▲	9 Kitchin	Joseph Bank's Clothiers
▼	11 Kitchin	Wachovia Bank
▲	1 Biltmore Plaza	Biltmore Estate Office
▲	Biltmore Plaza	New Morning Bldg.(Bookmart, Early Music Shop)
▼	Lot/Drive	First Union Drive-Thru

HENDERSONVILLE ROAD

▼	Vacant Lot	
▲	32 Hendersonville Road	Biltmore Hardware
▼	124 Hendersonville Road	NCNB Bank
▼	17 Lula Street	U. S. Post Office
▼	Parking Lot	

LODGE STREET

◆	2 Lodge Street	2 Lodge Street
▼	3 Lodge Street	Check Cashing
▲	10 Lodge Street	Dancing Bear
◆	7 Lodge Street	Hot Shot Cafe
▲	8 Lodge Street	Biltmore Shoe Shop
▲	26 Lodge Street	Money Worth Realty
▲	30 Lodge Street	Depot Restaurant
▼	2 Biltmore Plaza	Canine Sheer Heaven
▲	2 Biltmore Plaza	Black Dome Mountain Shop
▲	3 Brook Street	Korth & Co.
▼	47 Brook Street	Kansler, Crawley & Lee
▼	Parking Lot	
◆	5 Brook Street	AAA Parts
▼	8 Brook Street	Sherlins Auto Service
▼	9 Brook Street	Phillips Gas
▼	10 Brook Street	Four Seasons Greenhouse
▼	12 Brook Street	Price Piping
▼	14 Brook St.	Vacant Lot
▼	1 Lodge Street	Pedros' Porch
▼	Lodge Street	Kwik Copy (Biltmore Plaza Ofc. Bldg.)

▼	Lot	Lot between Mudpies & Stuffed Artichoke
▼	Sweeten Creek	Pot of Gold
▼	Vacant Lot	

BOSTON WAY

◆	Parking	New Morning Gallery
▲	7 Boston Plaza	New Morning Gallery / Bellagio
◆	10 Biltmore Plaza	Biltmore Plaza Office Bldg.
▼	8 Boston Way	ABC Store
▲	5 Boston Way	5 Boston Way
▲	7 Boston Way	Corner House Cafe
▼	Boston Way	First Union Drive Thru
▼	Parking Lot	Wachovia
▲	2 Boston Way	Old World Christmas Shop
▲	4 Boston Way	Celebrations
▲	6 Boston Way	Chelsea's

ANGLE STREET

◆	1 Angle Street	First Union Bank
▼	Angle Street	Wachovia Drive Thru
◆	3 Angle Street	All Souls Parish Office
▼	9 Angle Street	BB&T Bank
▲	2 Angle Street	All Souls Church
▼	Playground	All Souls Church
◆	12 Angle Street	Biltmore Manor Nursing Home
◆	14 Angle Street	Biltmore Manor Nursing Home
▲	16 Angle Street	Biltmore Manor Nursing Home

HENDERSONVILLE ROAD

▼	Lot	Biltmore Village Dolls
▼	35 Hendersonville Road	McDonald's
▼	47 Hendersonville Road	Exxon
▼	61 Hendersonville Road	Hardee's
▼	97 Hendersonville Road	Jerry's Gulf